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ABSTRACT

The investigation focused on college students' conception of leisure in the future, particularly their viewpoint about (1) availability of leisure time, (2) role of society relative leisure and (3) use of leisure time. A total of 90 undergraduate college students responded to a questionnaire specially designed for this study. Data indicate agreement between men and women that amount of leisure time will increase in the future, and they hold society responsible for preparing them for leisure. However, men and women tend to differ in what they expect from society; men focus on education while women look for socially planned activities. Significant differences were found between current leisure activities engaged in by men and women. Regarding future leisure activities, both sexes predict for themselves a significant increase in athletics. While interest in sports by men seems to overshadow current activities such as reading or camping, women divide their interest between sports and traveling. Men and women seem unaware of differences in their respective leisure choices, which indicates a communication problem between the sexes. Implications for leisure education such as the importance of orienting it to the future were discussed. (Author)

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OF LEISURE: EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

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OF LEISURE: EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

Regina Rumstein

Our concern with leisure is variously reflected by the communication media, i.e.: radio and television programs, newspaper articles, magazines, journals, and books (for example: Kraus, 1971; Dahl, 1972; Zeigler, 1973) exclusively devoted to the topic. Not surprisingly, leisure research has gained in momentum (Burdge, 1974). The Journal of Leisure Research, published by the National Recreation and Park Association in cooperation with the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation of the U.S. Department of Interior, has as its sole purpose to report studies in the area of recreation and leisure. College and universities have created divisions or departments that deal with recreation and leisure studies. Clubs and leisure societies such as the Society of Park and Recreation Education (SPRE) have sprung up. The question is, why the heightened interest in leisure and recreation?

Society moves in complex ways and explanations of social phenomena generally run the risk of being reductionistic. Yet, if we are to understand social change, we must attempt to clarify social issues and identify causal relationships between

separate social events. Prognoses of the future deal with such issues as increased technology and advanced mechanization, accelerated population growth, higher level of education, reduced work week, lowered retirement age, and longevity. Generally, it is predicted that a shift toward an increased supply of human energy coupled with a decreased demand on human energy for work and duty will occur. Presumably, more "free" time will become available and thus, leisure activities are likely to assume a central role in our lives.

At this point it seems appropriate to clarify the concept "leisure". The American College Dictionary (1968) defines leisure as a time interval that is free of work-related demands. Leisure seems derived from the Latin word "licere" which means "to be free". According to Kelly (1972) leisure refers to activities that are relatively free of constraints and differ in purpose rather than content from work activities. Leisure time activities seem motivated by a search for social and personal satisfaction rather than financial gain. However, Hall (1969) makes the point that motivation for leisure and "... economic and social motivation are probably so intertwined that they cannot be definitely separated" (p.37).

In short, leisure time denotes a block of time unoccupied by job or duty requirements; leisure activity refers to unhurried behavior for purposes other than job requirements.

The focus of this investigation is on conceptions held

by young people regarding leisure time and leisure activities. More particularly, the concern is with college students' view of 1) future availability of leisure time, 2) the role of society vis-a-vis leisure time and activities, and 3) the use of leisure time in the future. A further aim is to explore background factors that may influence students' conceptions of leisure. While college students are less than representative of young people in general, they do represent a growing segment of youth in our society.

SUBJECTS

A total of ninety (30 males and 60 females) day session undergraduate college students participated as respondents. Students were enrolled at a large eastern, urban university and their ages ranged from 18 to 27 years. The median age was 21 for men and 19 for women respectively. Of the male students 76.7% were single and 23.3% married, whereas 88.3% of the females were single and 11.7% married.

PROCEDURE

Students were randomly selected and asked to respond anonymously to a five-part questionnaire, specially constructed for this study. Respondents were given uniform instructions regarding the purpose of the study and the use of this questionnaire.

Part I of the questionnaire explores students' conceptions of availability of future leisure time, that is, students were asked to state whether they believed the amount of available leisure time would increase, remain the same, or decrease. Part II and Part III consist of restricted free-answer items; Part II focuses on society's role in preparing for leisure, while Part III deals with likely choices of future leisure activities by men and women. Items in Part IV and V are of the check list inventory variety. Part IV explores personal data and background information of the respondent. Information asked for includes age, sex, and marital status. Also, Mother's and Father's occupations are sought which are classified according to the listing in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (1968). Part V requires respondents to identify major leisure activities in which they presently participate.

RESULTS

Table I reports the numbers and percentages of responses by men and women regarding availability of future leisure time. Of the 90 students participating in the study, almost nine out of ten (87.8%) believe the amount of leisure time will increase. A comparison of responses by those who believe there will be an increase in leisure time shows no significant difference between men and women. Four out of

90 students say the amount of leisure time will remain the same, and seven individuals anticipate a decrease in leisure time.

Table I

Availability of Leisure Time

in the Year 2,000

Category	Men		Women		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Increase	86.7	26	88.3	53	87.8	79
Same	3.3	1	5.0	3	4.4	4
Decrease	10.0	3	6.7	4	7.8	7
Total		30		60		90

The analysis proceeds to examine answers to how society should prepare for increased leisure time. Again, statistically significant differences between responses by men and women fail to emerge. However, as seen in Table II, there is a tendency by men to choose education first (42.3%), followed by socially planned activities (38.5%). The reverse holds true for women with 42.3% choosing socially planned activities and 34.6% education, as a way to prepare for increased leisure time.

Table II

What Society should do to prepare for

Increased Leisure Time in the Year 2,000

Category	Men		Women		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Nothing	7.7	2	3.9	2	5.1	4
Facilities	11.5	3	19.2	10	16.7	13
Education	42.3	11	34.6	18	37.2	29
Activities	38.5	10	42.3	22	41.0	32
Total		26		52		78

Current leisure activities engaged in by men and women are summarized in Table III. Of the twenty possible choices, the one activity selected most frequently by male students is sports (33.4%), followed by reading (16.7%), camping (10.0%), and playing an instrument (10.0%). Female students give highest priority to watching television (20.0%), followed by sports (11.6%), and traveling (10.0%). The preference of men for sports is significantly greater than that of women (CR 2.50. $p < .05$).

TABLE III

Current Leisure Activities Engaged in by Men and Women

	Description	Men		Women	
		%	N	%	N
1.	arts and crafts	0	0	8.3	5
2.	concerts & theater	3.3	1	6.7	4
3.	movies	0	0	8.3	5
4.	parties	3.3	1	0	0
5.	camping	10.0	3	1.7	1
6.	collect	0	0	1.7	1
7.	dance	3.3	1	6.7	4
8.	games	0	0	0	0
9.	play an instrument	10.0	3	3.3	2
10.	read	16.7	5	6.7	4
11.	sing	3.3	1	3.3	2
12.	social, service organizations	6.7	2	8.3	5
13.	sports	33.4	10	11.6	7
14.	travel	3.3	1	10.0	6
15.	museums	0	0	0	0
16.	television	6.7	2	20.0	12
17.	unstructured activities	0	0	0	0
18.	education	0	0	0	0
19.	sexual activities	0	0	1.7	1
20.	creative writing	0	0	1.7	1
	Total		30		60

Table IV presents choices men make for themselves and for women regarding leisure in the future. For themselves, men project an emphasis on sports (70%) which seems to overshadow such current interests as reading, camping, or playing an instrument. More than half of the men (53.9%) believe that women will also prefer sports over other leisure activities. Interestingly, no significant differences emerge in the area of sports between choices men make for women and men make for themselves. Relatively few men (10%) believe they will seek sexual experiences during leisure time; in a like vein only 11.6% of the men think that women will find sex an acceptable leisure activity in the future.

Table V is a complementary presentation of choice by women for themselves and for men. About one third of the women (33.3%) select sports for themselves, whereas more than half (52.7%) choose sports for men. Women, apparently, have significantly different expectations for themselves and for men in this area (CR 2.12, $p < .05$). That is, women believe men will be more interested in sports activities than they themselves. The second activity most frequently selected by women for themselves (28.3%) and for men (15.8%) is traveling. No significant differences are seen in the area of travel between choices women make for men and women make for themselves.

Comparisons of future choices men make for themselves (Table IV) and future choices women make for themselves (Table V) reveal statistically significant differences between the two sexes in sports (CR 3.30, $p<.01$) and travel (CR 2.37, $p<.05$). While men predict for themselves a dominant interest in sports, women seem to divide their activities between sports and traveling. An analysis of choices men and women make for each other for the future (Tables IV and V) shows no significant differences in the area of sports. But significant differences are found between choices men and women make for each other regarding travel (CR 2.49, $p<.05$). Men seem to underestimate women's preference for traveling and women overestimate men's involvement with traveling.

A comparison between current activities (Table III) engaged in by men and predictions of future activities that men make for themselves (Table IV) points to a significant increase in athletics (CR 2.84, $p<.01$). The same comparison for women, between current activities (Table III) and future activities (Table V), shows a similar trend toward a significantly stronger interest in sports (CR 2.85, $p<.01$). In addition, women envision for themselves a significant increase in traveling (CR 2.55, $p<.05$) and a considerable decline in watching television (CR 2.14, $p<.05$).

An examination of the background data reveals a moderate (.45) correlation between female choices of leisure activities

and father's occupation. Female students who indicate their fathers have professional or clerical occupations are more likely than others to make traveling their current and future leisure choice. In general, background data obtained failed to contribute meaningful information as to the kind of leisure activity men and women are likely to select in years to come.

TABLE IV

Choices of Leisure Activities
by Men for the year 2,000

Description	Men		Women	
	%	N	%	N
1. arts & crafts	0	0	7.7	2
2. concerts & theater	0	0	0	0
3. movies	0	0	0	0
4. parties	0	0	0	0
5. camping	0	0	0	0
6. collect	0	0	0	0
7. dance	0	0	0	0
8. games	3.3	1	3.8	1
9. play an instrument	0	0	0	0
10. read	3.3	1	0	0
11. sing	0	0	0	0
12. social, service organizations	0	0	0	0
13. sports	70.0	21	53.9	14
14. travel	6.7	2	7.7	2
15. museums	0	0	0	0
16. television	6.7	2	7.7	2
17. unstructured activities	0	0	3.8	1
18. education	0	0	3.8	1
19. sexual activities	10.0	3	11.6	3
20. creative writing	0	0	0	0
Total		30		26

Note: Men failed to make a choice for women in 4 instances

TABLE V

Choices of Leisure Activities
by Women for the year 2,000

Description	Men		Women	
	%	N	%	N
1. arts & crafts	1.7	1	8.4	5
2. concerts & theater	0	0	0	0
3. movies	1.7	1	3.3	2
4. parties	1.7	1	1.7	1
5. camping	1.7	1	0	0
6. collect	0	0	0	0
7. dance	0	0	3.3	2
8. games	1.7	1	0	0
9. play an instrument	0	0	0	0
10. read	1.7	1	1.7	1
11. sing	0	0	0	0
12. social, service organization	5.4	3	3.3	2
13. sports	52.7	30	33.3	20
14. travel	15.8	9	28.3	17
15. museums	0	0	0	0
16. television	8.8	5	6.7	4
17. unstructured activities	1.7	1	3.3	2
18. education	0	0	0	0
19. sexual activities	5.4	3	6.7	4
20. creative writing	0	0	0	0
Total		57		60

Note: Women failed to make a choice for men in 3 instances

Implications and Conclusions

Prior research in the area of leisure and the college student dealt with such issues as background factors that influence students' selection of leisure activities (Ross, 1967), and the relationship between leisure activities and experiences of self-actualization (Kleiber, 1973). The present study seeks to explore a relatively neglected area, that is, students' conception of how to prepare for leisure and what recreational activities men and women are likely to choose for themselves and for each other. Findings suggest that both young men and women expect leisure time to increase in the future and they see society as having the major responsibility in preparing them for this change.

These results would seem to highlight a need for the pooling of resources on all levels among government, private, commercial, and community agencies which would permit a constructive approach to leisure (Corbin and Tart, 1973).

An analysis of current leisure activities engaged in by the college student reflects traditional social expectations for the sexes. That is men tend to choose sports, the typical active "male" pastime, whereas women prefer watching television, a more passive endeavor. These findings raise questions about the impact of such movements as women's liberation on current leisure activities of women, an area

that would seem worthy of investigation. Students' choices of current leisure activities are made within a comparatively narrow range which suggests a lack of information as to the kinds of facilities presently available.

The relationship, albeit moderate (r.45), between women's choice of traveling and their fathers occupations may be explained as the consequences of early life experiences. It seems likely that children who, in the process of socialization acquire positive attitudes toward leisure travel, will as adults find travel important (Kelly, 1974). With regard to the limited information from the background data, results point to the complexity of the problem and suggest continued research in this direction.

When men are asked to choose for the future, they again turn to sports as the preferred leisure activity for themselves. It is significant that men believe women will share this interest with them in the coming years. Perhaps men foresee a growing opportunity in sports for women which might stimulate a widespread interest in sports activities by the opposite sex. For as social norms and perceptions change, the meaning and popularity of a specific leisure activity change accordingly. With respect to travel, findings suggest a lack of awareness by men of the extent to which women prefer this kind of leisure activity for the future.

The choices women make for their future recreational pastime assign an increasingly major role to sports, an activity formerly considered in the male domain. Apparently, these projections imply a change in expectations that women hold for themselves. Nonetheless, women predict a continued significant difference between themselves and men in the area of sports. A somewhat different picture emerges from an examination of the travel data. Here, women anticipate that men will share travel interest with them in the future.

It remains open to speculation, why, in predictions about high interest activities such as sports for men and travel for women, differences between the sexes tend to be discounted. In other words, men see no difference between choices they make for themselves and the opposite sex in the area of sports; women see no difference between choices they make for themselves and the opposite sex in the area of travel. Perhaps these findings illustrate a desire to share a high interest activity with a partner of the opposite sex. Another possibility may be that one's own interests are projected in the choices made for the opposite sex. Further exploration is needed to shed light on these phenomena. The demonstrated lack of awareness by men and women of the difference in each others taste for future recreational pastime points to a need for improved communication between the sexes in this area.

In general, students failed to be creative when asked to visualize leisure activities that might become available in years to come. These results have bearing on leisure education and the importance of orienting it to the future. Learning experiences that focus on special interests and talents may form the basis for recreational activities. This is in line with suggestions by Mobley (1968) for an interdisciplinary approach to "education for leisure".

Special college divisions and departments have been created for the expressed purpose of leisure studies, nonetheless, this type of approach needs further expansion. The position here is to develop course objectives within each discipline that would emphasize skills and habits, easily transformed into leisure activities. For instance, a course in geology might encourage not only hiking but also mineral collecting, and lapidary arts, including the use of stone for the construction of mosaics and pictures.

Leisure, no longer the perogative of the titled and wealthy, is rapidly becoming part of every person's life style in our society (Kraus, 1971). The challenge of leisure for education is manifold. First, there is a need to modify attitudes and values so that leisure activities are seen as contributing to the growth of the whole person; second, interests and skills have to be developed for the constructive and enjoyable use of free time; third, men and women need to learn

about differences in their respective leisure patterns; Fourth, an innovative approach to leisure for the older person is needed. Education for leisure is an ongoing process which demands a focus on the changing realities of life. The mandate to education is to provide the tools and symbols which would enable each one of us to create meaning and purpose in leisure pursuits.

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